

In Memoriam

Stewart Maxwell

(1931 – 2000)



After a valiant battle that lasted 8 months, Stewart Maxwell passed away peacefully on September 25th, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He was a close friend and colleague to many in Bently Nevada. As Don Bently wrote of him in January of this year when he learned that Stewart had leukemia, “You are certainly one of the most outstanding people of the 20th century for solving rotor dynamic problems.”

Stewart was educated at the Royal Technical College in Salford, England, earning his degree in Mechanical Engineering. After six years in the aerospace industry in the field of stress and vibration analysis, he spent a number of years with Westinghouse Canada as a Research and Development Engineer in experimental stress analysis, noise, and vibration, and then as a Senior Design Engineer in the Turbine Engineering Department. In the early 1970s Stewart joined Ontario Hydro and was soon responsible for providing advice, guidance, and assistance on all aspects of maintaining plant and

equipment in satisfactory operating condition from the viewpoint of vibration and balancing. As Section Head, Machine Dynamics, his responsibilities included the development and implementation of methods and techniques to ensure that Ontario Hydro was kept at the state-of-the-art in these areas.

He was Chairman of the Canadian Advisory Committee to the Standards Council of Canada, and also represented Canada at the International Standards Organization (ISO) Committee for Standardization on Vibration of Machines. He was also one of the founders and first Executive Director of the CMVA (Canadian Machinery Vibration Association).

Stewart had a sharp wit, a keen mind, and the ability to simplify complex problems. It was this ability that led him to examine and utilize dual measurements of relative and absolute motions on large steam turbine generators. He presented his findings at a number of Senior Orbit Symposiums in Minden, Nevada. In an era of casing motion and Rathbone Charts, it was Stewart who quipped, “Velocity may suit your philosophy, but it’s mils that kills.”

Stewart will be remembered by all those who knew him for his initiative, integrity, good nature, common sense, and dry sense of humor. His contributions to making the world a better and safer place through his dedication to his career and his family are an example to us all. ☺

11 January 2000

Dear Stewart,

Jack Harrison told me the bad news of your health. I am sorry to hear about it. Your numerous contributions to the field of rotating machinery have been excellent.

In addition to that, the very early work you did on dual measurements of relative and absolute motions on machinery assisted Bently Nevada Corporation with the sale of the concept of dual measurements. Throughout your career at Ontario Hydro you corrected hundreds of problems for your employer. Because of these accomplishments and your effective work in teaching people how rotating machinery works, you are certainly one of the most outstanding people of the 20th century for solving rotor dynamic problems.

I wish you and Jayne the very best.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Bently, P.E.

Chairman and CEO

continued on page 36